

Wild trout conservation and fisheries revival in Wester Ross and the Isle of Skye: time for rethink?

One day workshop, Kinlochewe Village Hall, 30th April 2019

(& wild trout field excursion 1st May)



Supported by the Wester Ross Area Salmon Fishery Board, the Wild Trout Trust and Marine Scotland

The Isle of Skye and Wester Ross Fisheries Trust area remains a stronghold for wild Brown trout (*Salmo trutta*) populations. Wild trout are found in hundreds of freshwater lochs and coastal stream systems within the area where they are often a keystone species. There is much diversity within the species and in the habitats in which trout are found.



Loch Maree system ferox trout by Paul Vecsei
<https://www.flickr.com/people/fishasart/>

For example, Loch Maree and the Camasunary river system on the Isle of Skye formerly supported fisheries where sea trout of over 4kg were regularly caught. At the other end of the wild trout spectrum are isolated populations of small brown trout living above waterfalls where trout complete their life cycle and mature without growing larger than 15cm in length.

The purpose of this workshop is to review new information and objectives for both the conservation of wild trout diversity and the revival and management of once prolific trout fisheries.

In the past 10 years, advances have been made in our understanding of the genetic diversity of brown trout, the consequences of stocking programmes, and of the movement and performance of sea trout in coastal waters. What has been learned that can help to guide fisheries management and conservation?

The outline plan is to split the day into two sessions:

- **Session 1: Wild trout diversity**

This session will review recent findings of genetic studies and fisheries management activities to address questions with regard to providing guidance for conserving wild trout populations and supporting trout and sea trout fisheries.

- **Session 2: Sea trout in the sea**

This session will review studies of sea trout in the sea including data from sea trout sampling in coastal waters, sea trout tracking and trapping studies, and scale reading.

This workshop builds on previous studies in Wester Ross some of which can be found via links here:

<https://www.wrft.org.uk/fisheries/browntrout.cfm> ; <https://www.wrft.org.uk/fisheries/seatrout.cfm>

A summary of a previous workshop in 2010 which considered the need to stock sea trout in Wester Ross can be found here: <https://www.wrft.org.uk/news/newsitem.cfm?id=113> .

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